



Articles for 2022 Town Meeting

Ban the Bag & More asks for your support for these proposed articles:

- 1. Polystyrene and Disposable Plastic Reduction Bylaw**
- 2. An Act Authorizing the Town to Establish a Minimum Charge for Checkout Bags (Home Rule Petition)**

Article I

Polystyrene and Disposable Plastic Reduction



REASONS for the BAN

Negative environmental impacts

- persistence of styrenes for 100s of years in the environment
- production of toxic fumes when incinerated
- ingestion by wildlife
- plastic contamination of Acton's wetlands, greenspaces, and roadsides

Health impacts

- ingestion of microplastics via the food chain; these can carry toxins and/or pathogens, and may be carcinogenic
- probable carcinogenicity of styrene, according to the World Health Organization (WHO)

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH on PLASTIC, STYRENE, and HEALTH

- Findings of a 2019 University of Newcastle (AU) study estimate average global human ingestion of microplastics at as much 5 grams — the mass of a credit card — per week.
<https://bit.ly/3vaSVCX>
- Styrene, a chemical in polystyrene, was classified in 2018 by WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) as a “probable carcinogen” (Group 2A listing).
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/05/180530113105.htm>

More research evidence of health impacts available on request

What would be banned and when?

ALL POLYSTYRENE
including clear, foam, and cutlery items
(bylaw effective January 1, 2023)



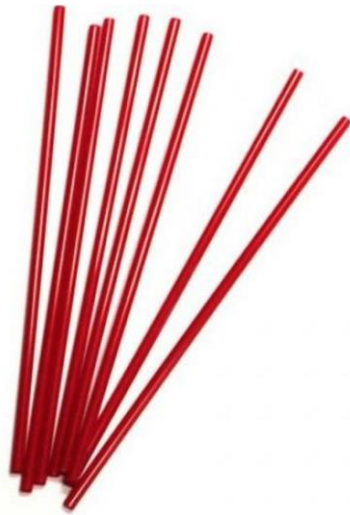
knives,
forks,
spoons



These **DISPOSABLE PLASTIC UTENSILS** would also be banned



STRAWS



STIRRERS



CHOPSTICKS



SPLASH STICKS

These items would be **ACCEPTABLE**



**SUGARCANE
/ BAGASSE**



ALUMINUM



PAPER



**FOOD-SAFE
PLASTICS 1 & 5**



**COMPOSTABLE
DRINKWARE**



BPI®

**COMPOSTABLE
IN INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES**

Check locally, as these do not exist in many communities. Not suitable for backyard composting.



**NON-POLYSTYRENE CUTLERY
& PAPER STRAWS**

available on request or from a self-service dispenser



WAY TO GO, Benjarong!



COMMUNICATION

with BUSINESSES

- **BtB&More** talked with **56** businesses on **Great Road**, in **West Acton**, and along **Main Street**
- **23%** are already using alternatives to polystyrene products
- **75+%** use some polystyrene (especially straws)
- **3** businesses raised concern about costs

EXCEPTIONS

- The Acton Board of Health may exempt a business for six months in the case of undue hardship.
- Items purchased or prepared and packaged *outside* the Town of Acton are permitted to be sold.



POLYSTYRENE BYLAWS

are in effect in these

AREA TOWNS

CHELMSFORD • CONCORD • LINCOLN

MAYNARD • SUDBURY • WAYLAND • WESTFORD

These supermarkets have *already* configured their operations to respond to polystyrene bylaws in several of the above towns.



Article 2

Authorize the Acton Select Board to Petition the General Court for a Home Rule Act Authorizing Acton to Establish a Minimum Charge for Check-out Bags



15¢ minimum bag charge



REASONS for a MINIMUM BAG CHARGE

- **incentivizes customers to reuse check-out bags**
- **is environmentally responsible**
- **provides customer choice — to pay the bag charge or bring reusable bags**
- **generates some revenue for the retailer (15¢ per bag)**
- **reduces waste and associated costs of recycling/disposal**

ENFORCEMENT and AMENDMENT

The bylaw stipulates that the Acton Board of Health or its agent:

- **would have the authority to enforce both bylaws**
- **could adopt and amend rules and regulations**

PLEASE SUPPORT THESE ARTICLES

Articles 1 and 2 advance the Town of Acton's sustainability goals, and protect human and environmental health.

